

UNITED STATES MISSION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Jim Acheson papers

NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release No. 4144
January 21, 1963

Statement by Clayton Fritchey, Special Assistant to Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson:

The authors of the Saturday Evening Post article which charged Governor Stevenson with opposing the President's policy on the blockading of Cuba now acknowledge that they were authoritatively informed before writing the article that Stevenson "favored the blockade."

The authors chose not to report Governor Stevenson's support of the blockade, even though they now admit I had clearly informed them as to his position.

In a "footnote" in the latest issue of the Saturday Evening Post, Stewart Alsop refers to a conversation between Charles Bartlett, the co-author, and me. He says Mr. Bartlett made notes of the talk, and Mr. Alsop quotes various excerpts from the notes.

First, the notes quote me as saying Governor Stevenson "opposed the air attack and favored the blockade." But when the article came out, it accused Stevenson of being against the "consensus" for the blockade or quarantine.

Secondly, the Bartlett memo reveals I told the authors that Governor Stevenson felt any discussion of eliminating foreign bases should be "in connection with the disarmament negotiations." This was not only ignored in the article but the Saturday Evening Post headline said just the opposite. The headline read:

"Adlai wanted a Munich. He wanted to trade U.S. bases for Cuban bases."

Thirdly, the memo discloses that the authors were informed that Stevenson "wanted all nuclear capability defused and the bases dismantled." This was the policy that was followed by the U.S. but the article pictured Governor Stevenson as being the only dissenter from this policy.

Fourthly, the memo quotes me as saying "Stevenson's approach was to avoid military action until the peace-keeping machinery of the UN had a chance to function." This was the policy that was followed (the quarantine was not put into effect until two days after the issue was taken to the UN). But the magazine article also ignored this.

As to Guantanamo, I said that my understanding of Governor Stevenson's position was that if there was to be any discussion of bases, it should be only after the Cuban military threat had been neutralized. Further, the original Saturday Evening Post article said:

"Stevenson was only willing to discuss Guantanamo and the European bases with the Communists after a neutralization of the Cuban missiles."

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Now, however, Stewart Alsop's new "footnote," plus a column on the subject by his brother, Joseph Alsop, insinuate that Mr. Stevenson was willing to "yield" or "abandon" Guantanamo in exchange for neutralization of the missiles. Again, this is not only inaccurate, but even contradicts the original account in the Saturday Evening Post.

Governor Stevenson has already given his views on the Saturday Evening Post article. He has nothing to add and, so far as he is concerned, the matter is closed.

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